

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY UPDATE**November 14 - 20, 2014**

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1. [Kerry: Middle East Requires Long-Term Commitment](#) (11-20-2014)

Washington — Every single day the United States pursues policies to advance security, economic prosperity, environmental protection, human rights, and development, Secretary of State John Kerry told an audience at the third annual Transformational Trends Policy Forum in Washington November 17. “But today I want to focus on ... the Middle East and North Africa.”

The United States must remain deeply engaged in this region because it is of vital importance to both U.S. security and the U.S. economy, especially in “a world where no distance, no ocean, no fence, no firewall, can truly shield us from danger,” Kerry said.

The secretary cited another reason for U.S. engagement, a reason “less tangible but equally profound” because the roots of modern civilization lie in the rich spiritual and ethical traditions that began in the Middle East and evolved into the values and ideals that guide the United States today.

“Our own nation is diverse in ethnicity, race, background, and creed, but united by a belief in the importance of every human being,” he said.

“America would not be America if we turned our back on” the millions of innocent people now suffering in the Middle East, Kerry said. “The United States is not party to the sectarian and inter-ethnic rivalries that divide much of the Middle East,” but it believes the rights of all, including minorities, should be upheld.

The activities of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) are directly opposed to that belief, the secretary said, adding, "ISIL doesn't hide its crimes."

ISIL's strategy is based entirely on fear, Kerry said, and listed its tools of torture, execution, forced military service, abduction, slavery, rape and destruction of heritage sites.

"Cultural and religious shrines have been desecrated, including the graves of prophets honored by all the children of Abraham," he said.

The United States is not alone in its opposition to ISIL. "Governments that can't agree on almost anything else agree on the imperative of confronting and defeating these terrorists," Kerry said. "This is true of Sunni and Shia leaders, Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, members of smaller minority groups."

As ISIL continues its campaign of terror, the United States has redoubled its efforts to feed the starving, to shelter the homeless, and to heal the wounded. "This is a commitment that we take seriously and that we will honor both during and after Iraq's efforts to drive ISIL out," the secretary pledged.

Kerry said he was aware that some believe U.S. airstrikes against ISIL in Syria will assist the country's longtime dictator, Bashar al-Assad, "but that assumption is actually based on a misreading of the political reality in Syria."

In fact, he said, the Assad regime and ISIL are symbiotic: "As ISIL presents itself as the only alternative to Assad, Assad purports to be the last line of defense against ISIL. Both are stronger as a result."

The United States and its partners seek "to offer the possibility of a new and more constructive choice ... an option that will be welcomed by every Syrian who wants to live in a country marked by civility and inclusiveness, good governance, and peace," the secretary said, adding that the United States believes most Syrians are searching for a way out of the chaos and bloodshed.

"Over time, we will only win the fight against violent extremism in the Middle East if we have a clear vision of what the future of that region should look like," Kerry said. "There must be visible and appealing alternatives to the nihilism that flows from the likes of ISIL, al-Qaida, al-Nusrah, and Khorasan, and those alternatives do exist today."

The United States and its partners are committed to making those alternatives stronger and more successful throughout the Middle East.

"Too many countries in the MENA [Middle East and North Africa] region are held back by inefficient and inequitable economic policies, unresponsive political institutions, inadequate investments in education, and a lack of fairness towards women," Kerry said. "Fixing that is a long-term proposition, but long-term commitments are precisely what we need right now. We cannot allow frustration in those countries to grow faster than opportunity."

2. State's Rose in Warsaw on Missile Defense (11-19-2014)

Remarks by Frank A. Rose, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

International Security and Missile Defense

Thank you for that kind introduction, and thanks for having me here today.

At the State Department, I am responsible for overseeing a wide range of defense issues, including missile defense policy. In this capacity, I served as the lead U.S. negotiator for the missile defense bases in Romania, Turkey, and Poland.

So I'm pleased to be here today to discuss international security and missile defense. In my remarks, I would like to discuss three key issues:

First, the United States' commitment to ballistic missile defense (BMD) and the Fiscal Year 2015 missile defense budget request;

Second, the significant progress that has been made in implementing the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) over the past year; and;

Third, cooperation on missile defense with allies and partners outside of Europe.

2015 Budget

The United States and NATO are committed to establishing ever more capable missile defenses to address the ballistic missile threat to Europe.

As U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel noted in March 2013, the U.S. commitment to NATO missile defense and the sites in Romania and Poland remains "ironclad."

On March 4, 2014, President Obama released his Fiscal Year 2015 budget submission that aligns defense program priorities and resources with the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR).

Let me highlight a couple of key issues that you may find of interest:

Overall, the budget request provides \$8.5 billion for missile defense, including \$7.5 billion for the Missile Defense Agency.

With regard to U.S. homeland defense provides funding to increase the number of long-range missile defense interceptors deployed in Alaska and California 30 to 44 by 2017.

It also funds a number of other programs to enhance the long-range system such as a new kill vehicle and new long-range discrimination radar.

With regard to regional missile defense, the budget continues funding to complete work on the missile defense base at Devesulu in Romania and provides additional funding (\$225.7 million) for the missile defense base in Poland.

The request also includes \$435.4 million for the procurement of SM-3 Block IB interceptors and \$263.9 for continued development of the longer-range SM-3 Block IIA interceptor.

The fact that the United States continues to devote such significant resources to the missile defense program is a clear signal of the importance the U.S. places on the program, including the sites in Romania and Poland.

European Phased Adaptive Approach

Let me now take a few moments to discuss where we are with regard to implementation of the President's European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) to missile defense.

In 2009, the President announced that the EPAA would "provide stronger, smarter, and swifter defenses of American forces and America's Allies," while relying on "capabilities that are proven and cost-effective."

Since then, we have been working hard to implement his vision. As you know, we have made great progress.

EPAA Phase 1 gained its first operational elements in 2011 with the start of a sustained deployment of an Aegis BMD-capable multi-role ship to the Mediterranean and the deployment of an AN/TPY-2 radar in Turkey.

With the declaration of Interim BMD Capability at the NATO Summit in Chicago in May 2012, this radar transitioned to NATO operational control.

Demonstrating its commitment to NATO collective defense, Spain agreed in 2011 to host four U.S. Aegis BMD-capable ships at the existing naval facility at Rota as a Spanish contribution to NATO missile defense.

In February 2014, the first of four missile defense-capable Aegis ships, the USS DONALD COOK, arrived in Rota, Spain. Over the next 18 months, three more of these multi-mission ships will deploy to Rota.

These multi-mission ships will conduct maritime security operations, humanitarian missions, bilateral and multilateral training exercises, and support U.S. and NATO operations, including NATO missile defense.

Stationing these naval assets in Spain places them in a position to maximize their operational flexibility for missions in the Atlantic and Mediterranean.

With regard to Phase 2, as you know, we have an agreement with Romania, ratified in December of 2011, to host a U.S. land-based SM-3 interceptor site beginning in the 2015 timeframe.

We greatly appreciate Romania's active role in preparing for the construction of the missile defense facility at the Romanian Deveselu Military Base.

The Romanian prompt whole-of-government support for the timely completion of the implementing arrangements and Romania's provision of security and its infrastructure efforts have been superb.

In October 2013, I had the honor of attending the ground-breaking ceremony at Deveselu Air Base to commemorate the start of the construction at the site.

And just over a month ago in early October, the U.S. Navy held a historic naval support facility establishment ceremony at the MD facility on Romania's Deveselu Base. This ceremony established the naval facility and installed its first U.S. commander. We view this as the first step in transitioning the facility from a construction site to the site of operations sometime next year.

When operational, this site, combined with BMD-capable ships in the Mediterranean, will enhance coverage of NATO from short- and medium-range ballistic missiles launched from the Middle East.

I also had the opportunity last year to visit the Lockheed-Martin facility in Moorestown, New Jersey, where they build the Aegis Ashore deck house and components destined for Romania.

We remain on schedule for deploying the system to Romania, with the site becoming operational in 2015.

And finally there is Phase 3.

This phase includes an Aegis Ashore site in Poland equipped with the new SM-3 Block IIA interceptor, per the Ballistic Missile Defense agreement between the United States and Poland that entered into force in September 2011.

This site is on schedule for deployment in the 2018 time frame. The interceptor site in Poland is key to the EPAA: When combined with other EPAA assets, Phase 3 will provide the necessary capabilities to provide ballistic missile defense coverage of all NATO European territory in the 2018 time frame.

So, as you can see, we are continuing to implement the President's vision for stronger, smarter and swifter missile defenses.

NATO Cooperation

At the Lisbon Summit in 2010, NATO Heads of State and Government agreed that the Alliance would develop a missile defense capability to protect Alliance territory, populations, and forces from ballistic missile attack.

At the Chicago and Wales Summits, Allied Heads of State and Government noted the potential opportunities for using synergies in planning, development, procurement, and deployment.

We need to take full advantage of this opportunity, whether bilaterally or multilaterally, within or outside of NATO.

There are several approaches Allies can take to make important and valuable contributions to NATO BMD.

First, Allies can acquire fully capable BMD systems possessing sensor, shooter and command and control capabilities.

Second, Allies can acquire new sensors or upgrade existing ones to provide a key BMD capability.

Finally, Allies can contribute to NATO's BMD capability by providing essential basing support, such as Turkey, Romania, Poland, and Spain have agreed to do.

In all of these approaches, however, the most critical requirement is NATO interoperability.

Yes, acquiring a BMD capability is, of course, good in and of itself.

But if the capability is not interoperable with the Alliance then its value as a contribution to Alliance deterrence and defense is significantly diminished.

It is only through interoperability that the Alliance can gain the synergistic effects from BMD cooperation that enhance the effectiveness of NATO BMD through shared battle-space awareness and reduced interceptor wastage.

Missile Defense Developments in Other Regions

The United States, in consultation with our allies and partners, is continuing to bolster missile defenses in other key regions, such as the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific, in order to strengthen regional deterrence architectures.

As with Europe, we are tailoring our approaches to the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific so that they reflect the unique deterrence and defense requirements of each region.

In the Middle East, we are already cooperating with our key partners bilaterally and multilaterally through venues such as the recently established U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Strategic Cooperation Forum.

At the September 26, 2013, Strategic Cooperation Forum (SCF), Secretary Kerry and his Foreign Ministry counterparts reaffirmed their intent, first stated at the September 28, 2012, SCF, to "work toward enhanced U.S.-GCC coordination on Ballistic Missile Defense."

Speaking on December 7, 2013, at the Manama Dialogue, Secretary Hagel announced several initiatives, one of which was that the "DoD will work with the GCC on better integration of GCC members' missile defense capabilities."

Several of our partners in the region have expressed an interest in buying missile defense systems, and some have already done so. For example, the UAE has contracted to buy two THAAD batteries that, when operational, will enhance the UAE's security as well as regional stability.

The UAE also has taken delivery of its Patriot PAC-3 batteries, which provide a lower-tier, point defense of critical national assets. We look forward to advancing cooperation and interoperability with our GCC partners in the years ahead.

Additionally and separately, we are continuing our long-standing and robust cooperation with Israel on missile defense on key systems such as Arrow 3, David's Sling, and Iron Dome.

In the Asia-Pacific, we are continuing to cooperate through our bilateral alliances and key partnerships.

For example, the United States and Japan already are working closely together to develop an advanced interceptor known as the SM-3 Block IIA and deployment of a second AN/TPY-2 radar to Japan, while continuing to work on enhancing interoperability between U.S. and Japanese forces.

As a result of U.S.-Australia Foreign and Defense ministerial consultations this year, the United States and Australia are establishing a bilateral BMD Working Group to examine options for potential Australian contributions to BMD in the Asia-Pacific region.

Additionally, we are also continuing to consult closely with the Republic of Korea (ROK) as it develops the Korean Air and Missile Defense system, which is designed to defend the ROK against air and missile threats from North Korea.

No Constraints

Let me say a few things about missile defense and Russia.

With regard to where things stand today regarding our discussions on missile defense, Russia's intervention into the crisis in Ukraine, in violation of international law, has led to the suspension of our military-to-military dialogue, and we are not currently engaging Russia on the topic of missile defense.

Prior to the suspension of our dialogue, Russia continued to demand that the United States provide it "legally binding" guarantees that our missile defense will not harm/diminish its strategic nuclear deterrent.

We have made clear to the Russians that EPAA is not directed toward Russia and that we cannot and will not accept legally-binding constraints that limit our ability to defend ourselves, our allies, and our partners.

As Secretary Hagel's March 2013 BMD announcement makes clear, the United States must have the flexibility to respond to evolving ballistic missile threats, without obligations that limit our BMD capabilities.

Conclusion

Let me conclude by saying that we have made a great deal of progress on missile defense over the past several years.

Implementation of the EPAA and NATO missile defense is going well. For example, we broke ground on the missile defense site at Devesulu last October and are on schedule for the base to become operational in 2015.

Additionally, Congress has continued to provide sufficient funding for the missile defense program, even in these challenging times.

The United States looks forward to continuing to work with our allies and friends around the world – and especially Poland – to improve our collective security.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

Related Articles:

[State's Rose in Bucharest on European Missile Defense](#)

3. Dempsey 'Encouraged, but Pragmatic' About Iraq (11-19-2014)

By Jim Garamone
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19, 2014 – Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey is “encouraged, but pragmatic” about progress in Iraq to counter the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, attended the Defense One Summit here today. He spoke about his recent trip to Iraq, where he met with U.S. service members and Iraqi and Kurdish leaders.

“The new Iraqi leaders inherited deep structural disarray,” the chairman said. “They are going to need a combination of courage, luck and leadership to manage their way through this.”

It will also take time, he said. The new Iraqi government has dismissed a number of military leaders and seeks to appoint more competent leaders from all sectors of Iraq to replace them.

Iraqis Gain Some Tactical Success

Iraq’s security force is having some tactical success in pushing ISIL away from Baghdad, Dempsey said.

“Over the next few months, with the help of our advisors and the training effort we have started as well as the military campaign from the air, I think there will be progress on the ground,” the chairman said. “They are doing much better, but they have some deep structural vulnerability that must be fixed.”

Looking back on his career, the general said this is his third time in Iraq. He was a battalion commander in the first Gulf War, a division commander and the commander of Multinational Security Transition Command Iraq in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and now he’s facing the problems with ISIL.

It’s the Iraqi’s Campaign

“This one is different,” Dempsey said. “Instead of grabbing ahold of it and owning it, and gradually transitioning back, we’re telling the Iraqis from the start that this is about you. This has to be your campaign.”

The chairman gave as an example an incident he saw when he visited Iraq last weekend. Iraqi forces, he said, called U.S. officials with a request for an airdrop on Mount Sinjar. The Americans pointed out that the Iraqis have airlifters -- C-130Js -- and had the needed supplies.

“Turned out all they needed was the expertise to rig the parachute extraction system that would do the airdrop,” he said. “That’s the right answer. They do what they can do and we fill the gaps they have in capabilities.”

Meanwhile, the chairman said, the United States has a strategy to go after ISIL.

“I’ve got a 10-page document from the National Security Council,” Dempsey said. “I’ve got a 503-page document from U.S. Central Command. I’ve got 190 planners down there in Tampa from 30 nations. We have a strategy.”

However, that strategy is “going to change” and it “will change often,” he said.

The objective -- to defeat ISIL -- will not change, Dempsey said.

Biographies:

[Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey](#)

Related Articles:

[Dempsey: Iraqis Play Key Role in Anti-ISIL Mission](#)

Related Sites:

[Special Report: Operation Inherent Resolve - Targeted Operations Against ISIL Terrorists](#)

4. Obama on Mideast, Ebola Situation Before Meeting Security Team (11-18-2014)

Remarks by the President before meeting with National Security and Public Health Teams on Ebola

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I’ve got my team here to talk about Ebola. But before I do, I want to just make mention of the horrific attacks that took place in Jerusalem.

We know that two attackers senselessly and brutally attacked innocent worshippers in a synagogue during their morning prayers. Obviously, we condemn in the strongest terms these attacks. A number of people were wounded, and four people were killed, including three American citizens. So this is a tragedy for both nations, Israel as well as the United States. And our hearts go out to the families who obviously are undergoing enormous grief right now.

Secretary Kerry has spoken to Prime Minister Netanyahu. President Abbas has strongly condemned the attacks. Tragically, this is not the first loss of life that we have seen in recent months. Too many Israelis have died. Too many Palestinians have died. And at this difficult time, I think it’s important for both Palestinians and Israelis to try to work together to lower tensions and to reject violence.

The murderers for today’s outrageous acts represent the kind of extremism that threatens to bring all of the Middle East into the kind of spiral from which it’s very difficult to emerge. And we know how this violence can get worse over time. But we have to remind ourselves that the majority of Palestinians and Israelis overwhelmingly want peace and to be able to raise their families knowing they’re safe and secure. The United States wants to work with all parties involved to make that a reality, and to isolate the kind of extremists that are bringing about this terrible carnage.

I now want to turn to the topic of this meeting, the Ebola situation. Obviously, some of the attention on the crisis has ebbed over the last several weeks, but the challenges remain. We have seen most recently Dr. Martin Salia, a surgeon who contracted Ebola in Sierra Leone -- he was flown back to the United States, to the Nebraska facility, to try to get treated. Unfortunately, he was already in critical condition, and, sadly, passed away early Monday morning. So our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Beyond this tragedy, though, we've established that when Ebola is promptly diagnosed and treated, then we have a great chance of curing it. Of the eight patients who were treated promptly in the United States, all eight have recovered. They are Ebola free and they are back with their families.

And after the first incident of Ebola in Dallas, and the unfortunate passing of Mr. Duncan, we promptly acted based on some of the lessons that were learned from Dallas. We've put in place new protocols for protective gear for our health workers. We ramped up our training and outreach for health workers. We've added screening for travelers to the United States. We're funneling all these passengers into five airports. And we put in place rules for public health workers to monitor travelers for 21 days after they arrive here.

As we saw in New York with Dr. Craig Spencer -- one of the courageous health workers who has voluntarily traveled to the region to try to fight this disease -- our efforts to identify, isolate, and then treat Ebola patients can work. America has proven that it can handle the isolated cases that may occur here.

But as long as the outbreak continues to rage in the three countries in West Africa -- Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea -- this is still going to be a major -- not just for America, but for the entire world.

We are nowhere near out of the woods yet in West Africa. The good news is, in parts of Liberia, our efforts, both civilian and military, are really paying dividends, and we are seeing the curve bending so that we are on track, with diligence, dealing with the hotspots that may still reemerge, to actually get a handle on that disease.

We're still seeing an increase of cases in Sierra Leone, although our British counterparts are doing an excellent job working with us and the international community to coordinate the situation there. In Guinea, the numbers are lower than in Sierra Leone or Liberia, but they're often in very remote areas that are hard to reach, and some of the international coordination still needs to improve.

The bottom line, though, is that we know how to treat this disease given that it has emerged as such a large, significant outbreak in these areas, and we recently saw some cases in Mali. It underscores how important it is to continue to push forward until we stamp out this disease entirely in that region. Until we do, there are threats of additional outbreaks. And given the nature of international travel, it means that everybody has some measure of risk.

Here at home, we've made great progress in preparing our health care system to deal with any possible threat. Our scientists continue to make progress with vaccines and treatments, but we've got plenty of work to do.

So all of this means that, although we should feel optimistic about our capacity to solve the Ebola crisis, we cannot be complacent simply because the news attention on it has waned. We have to stay with it. And that's why I'm calling on Congress to make sure that it approves before it leaves the emergency funding request that we put forward to respond to Ebola, both domestically and internationally.

The funding is going to help us strengthen our domestic health systems so that we can respond to any future cases that may arise in the United States wherever they might happen. It's going to devote much-needed resources to sustain our efforts in West Africa. It will accelerate the testing and approval of Ebola vaccines and treatments. And it's going to help vulnerable countries to, in the future, prevent, detect, and respond to outbreaks of various communicable diseases before they become epidemics.

And that, ultimately, is good for our public health. The more we can catch these things early where they begin, the less risks we have over the long term. And as I've said before, in some ways, we are lucky Ebola is a very difficult disease to transmit. If we have a comparably lethal disease that is airborne, we have much bigger problems. So this gives us an opportunity to start putting in place the kind of public health detection infrastructure around the globe that is necessary should additional pandemics or epidemics or outbreaks arise.

All this makes it necessary for Congress to act. This is not a Democratic issue; it is not a Republican issue -- this is a basic issue of the health and safety of the American people. And so I hope that Congress is on the case on this issue before they leave.

Thank you very much, everybody.

5. Secretary Calls Russia's Actions 'Dangerous, Irresponsible' (11-18-2014)

By Nick Simeone
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Nov. 18, 2014 – Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel today called Russia's actions in Ukraine "dangerous and irresponsible" and said the tensions provoked by Moscow have probably done more to unify NATO than anything else in years.

"It has brought the world together in a way where they are isolating themselves by their actions," Hagel said of Russia, as he took questions from Marines during a visit to North Carolina's Camp Lejeune.

'Very Dangerous' Actions

One service member asked the defense secretary if he envisioned the United States becoming more involved in the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Russia's actions toward Ukraine, as well as stepped-up Russian military air flights over European airspace and plans for similar flights over the Gulf of Mexico are "very dangerous," Hagel said.

"The violations of sovereignty and international law that the Russians have perpetuated continue to require responses," the defense secretary said. The United States is working with NATO "in shifting our entire rotational rapid deployment focus," he added.

U.S. European Command chief Air Force Gen. Philip M. Breedlove, who is also NATO's supreme allied commander for Europe, has said Russian military equipment continues to flow across the border into Ukraine, something Russia denies.

Biographies:

[Chuck Hagel](#)

Related Sites:

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6. Iran's Nuclear Program (11-18-2014)

John Kerry, Secretary of State, London, United Kingdom

Remarks with U.K. Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond Before Their Bilateral Meeting

SECRETARY KERRY: All right. Good morning, everybody. I am, first of all, delighted to be in London with my friend Philip Hammond. I think the fact that we are meeting on a regular basis now, almost weekly since he has become the foreign secretary, is an indicator of the importance of our relationship and the degree to which we rely on each other as we face some very, very complicated and challenging issues.

But I want to say something first, if I may. The reason I was delayed walking in here: I was just on the phone to Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel. This morning, today in Jerusalem, Palestinians attacked Jews who were praying in a synagogue. And people who had come to worship God in the sanctuary of a synagogue were hatcheted and hacked and murdered in that holy place in an act of pure terror and senseless brutality and murder.

I call on the Palestinian leadership at every single level to condemn this in the most powerful terms. This violence has no place anywhere, and particularly after a discussion that we had just the other day in Amman, where the prime minister of Israel flew to Amman, sat down with the Custodian of the al-Aqsa Mosque, King Abdullah of Jordan, and went to the extent of restoring in absolute terms the status quo with respect to the management of that mount, including lowering the age, taking away any age limits on people who could visit, guaranteeing that there were peaceful, completely uninterrupted visits over the weekend. And to have this kind of act, which is a pure result of incitement of calls for days of rage, of just an irresponsibility, is unacceptable.

So the Palestinian leadership must condemn this and they must begin to take serious steps to restrain any kind of incitement that comes from their language, from other people's language, and exhibit the kind of leadership that is necessary to put this region on a different path. Our hearts go out to all Israelis for the atrocity of this event and for all the reminders of history that come with it. This is – simply has no place in human behavior, and we need to hear from leaders who are going to lead – lead their people to a different place.

We might also say I know Philip and I have a lot to talk about this morning. This is a very critical week, obviously, in Iran negotiations. We hope we can get there, but we can't make any predictions, nor will we. It's imperative, obviously, that Iran work with us in all possible effort to prove to the world the program is peaceful, and we will reconvene in Vienna at the appropriate time later in the week. Our people are on the ground, they will begin work today, and we'll see where we are.

We also, obviously, have the challenge of ISIL, the challenge of Syria. We're making some progress in Iraq with ISIL. We're very grateful to our friends from Great Britain for their significant contribution. Again, the brutality and violence of Syria and also catastrophe of huge human proportions with almost 70 percent – 75 percent close of the population of Syria, the normal population, displaced. This is a challenge for all of us, but I believe we're up to the challenge, and we will continue over the next days to be deeply focused on it.

Philip.

FOREIGN SECRETARY HAMMOND: John, thank you. Well, John, welcome to London. It's a great pleasure to have you here. As you say, we have a huge amount to talk about today, and for the

UK, our close working relationship with the United States is the cornerstone and will remain the cornerstone of our foreign policy.

I'd like to join Secretary Kerry in condemning absolutely the attack that took place in Jerusalem, and sharing in his call for leaders to step up across the board and condemn what has happened in this religious place. Both sides in this conflict need to do everything possible to de-escalate the situation and reduce the tension that we've seen over the past few weeks in Jerusalem, which is extremely dangerous for both Palestinian and Jewish communities in that area.

We have many other things to discuss. As Secretary Kerry said, the negotiations with Iran are coming to a head over the next few days. And while we hope for the best, we hope for a deal, we will not do a bad deal with Iran, and we are going to need to see yet more flexibility by the Iranians to convince us that their intentions in their nuclear program are entirely peaceful.

Russia has to be consistently reminded of its obligations under the Minsk protocol. At the European Council yesterday we agreed to take further measures in response to the illegal elections in the eastern region of Ukraine. We will continue to apply pressure to Russia until it complies with those obligations. And we will work together on Syria; on Iraq; as Secretary Kerry said, on Libya, another area where we have many challenges to face; and of course, on the scourge of Ebola threatening West Africa.

So if you'll excuse us, we've got a lot of work to do this morning. Thank you very much.

SECRETARY KERRY: Thank you. Thank you, Philip.

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[Still Time to Reach Agreement with Iran, Kerry Says](#)

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7. Transformational Trends Policy Forum (11-17-2014) **Remarks at 3rd Annual Transformational Trends Policy Forum**

Remarks by John Kerry, Secretary of State, Washington, DC

Thank you. David, thank you very much. Thank you all. Good morning to you. I'm delighted to have a chance to be able to be here and appreciate the breadth of what you all are going to be tackling over the course of the day, so I particularly am grateful. David, thank you for – everyone – rearranging schedules so that we could flip this around today, literally leaving straight from here to go to the airport to head over to meetings tomorrow in London, some of which have to do with Iran and others don't. And then we are obviously entering in a key period with the negotiations regarding Iran's nuclear program, and I will go to Vienna at the appropriate moment.

But I particularly want to thank David Rothkopf and Foreign Policy magazine for hosting what has become now an annual tradition in partnership with the State Department. And it's a conference that focuses not just on the immediate, but on the trends that are either transforming now or may have the potential for transforming the world as we go forward. And I think it's safe to say that the last several years have reminded all of us that there is no such thing as a trouble-free zone on any world

map. No country is immune from the impact of troubles in some other country. So make no mistake: Every part of the globe merits our attention, and I'm not exaggerating.

I will assume chairmanship of the Arctic Council next April and we're already planning a two-year stint of the priorities for the Arctic, and that includes, I might add, priorities that extend to the Antarctic. There is no place that doesn't demand focus today, and it's not as a favor to another country that we do this. It's a necessity for our country, and that's why America's foreign policy is so broadly focused. In fact, I would share with you that the enterprise of American foreign policy and the State Department, in particular, is a little bit like an iceberg in the sense that if you're looking at it on the horizon, you may only see the top third or so above the water, but beneath the surface our foreign policy apparatus is more engaged and more connected in more places on more issues than at any other time in our history, and that is documentable.

Every single day we are pursuing policies that advance a security agenda, an economic agenda, an environmental agenda, a human rights agenda, and a development agenda. And every single day we are making decisions that have an impact on every continent. And I might add it is our privilege as America to be able to have that impact, and to have so many countries look to us for it.

But today I want to focus on the region that I know a lot of Americans wish was out of the headlines – the Middle East and North Africa. As most of you know, I was a United States senator for almost 29 years, and yes, senators know how to talk interminably, but if you're elected and reelected to the United States Senate five times, I would respectfully assert to you, hopefully it means you have also learned how to listen.

And if I were still in the Senate and I'd gone home for a town hall meeting this past weekend, I'm pretty sure I know what I would've heard. "Senator Kerry, if people in the Middle East are always going to fight each other and they want to kill each other, why do we need to get involved? Senator, there are people in New Bedford who are hurting, and how about helping them instead of trying to help the people in Baghdad or Aleppo? Senator, the last time we got involved in the conflict in the Middle East, we spent eight years and trillions of dollars in Iraq. Tell me why this will ever be different, or why does the Middle East matter? Why is it our problem?"

These are all terrific questions; all legitimate. But every question deserves an honest answer, and frankly, even if the truth isn't easy, Americans deserve nothing less. We all remember that great moment in "A Few Good Men" when Jack Nicholson's Colonel Jessup besieged by tough questions snaps, "You can't handle the truth." Well it might be heresy in today's Washington of simple storylines and hyperbolic headlines, but I think the American people do want the truth. I think they demand it and I think they deserve it.

So when it comes to the Middle East, this is my view of reality, a truth, if you want. We have to be deeply engaged – deeply engaged – in this region because it is directly in the interest of our national security and our economy and it is also in keeping with who we are. Pearl Harbor was the rudest of Awakenings to isolationists at home who, no matter how much some wished it, could not wall off America from the world's struggles. And 9/11 was a reminder that even a small group could hatch an evil plot thousands of miles from our shores that dramatically changed life for the world's only superpower. We dare not forget these lessons, not in a world where no distance, no ocean, no fence, no firewall, can truly shield us from danger.

Now technology has also changed things. Technology lets us live faster and longer, travel and communicate more widely, and compress a library of information into a single tiny chip. But when it comes to threats, it has also made the world a lot smaller. In the 21st century, next door is

everywhere. There can be no limit to our vigilance either in territory or time. And that is a primary reason why the Middle East matters.

But it also matters because our friends are so important to us. We are proudly and unapologetically connected to Israel and many Arab states with whom we have worked closely for decades. These relationships actually make us safer by enabling us to respond earlier and more capably to such security risks as terrorism, aggression, proliferation, and organized crime. By helping our friends to become stronger, we actually become stronger ourselves. And of course, turbulence in the Middle East is also a real threat to our own prosperity.

I know what some people say. “Well, we’re on the verge of kind of moving towards energy independence, so we can walk away from the Middle East.” Believe me: None of us miss the days of gas lines and price shocks because of instability in the Middle East. And yes, in recent years, we’ve made major strides in diversifying our energy sources. Yes, we now are less reliant on Middle East petroleum. But as we long ago discovered, the energy market is global. And any serious disruption to the Gulf oil supplies can have major consequences for our own well-being, as well as the global economy to which we are all attached today.

And even more than that, our exports drive our economy, create jobs and help our manufacturers, farmers, and service providers to compete and to grow. All of this is jeopardized when the building blocks of international security are shaken. And nowhere are those foundations at graver risk today than in the Middle East.

An example is, obviously, a country like Egypt, where it has been the intellectual and foundational cohesive glue, if you will, of the region in many ways for decades. One quarter of the world’s Arab population – fragile and obviously great challenges – if that were to suddenly be in jeopardy because of what is happening, the entire region would be in total turmoil and potentially even sectarian violence unfathomable today.

Another reason the Middle East matters is less tangible but equally profound. The roots of modern civilization can be traced in part to the men and women who centuries ago walked the narrow streets of Damascus and Alexandria, knelt at the holy places of Jerusalem and Mecca, and harvested crops from the fertile plains of the Nile and the Tigris-Euphrates valleys. From such distant ancestors we have inherited rich spiritual and ethical traditions that evolved over time into the values and ideals that guide us today. Our own nation is diverse in ethnicity, race, background, and creed, but united by a belief in the importance of every human being.

That conviction has been under vicious assault in the Middle East, and as a result millions of innocent people are living lives turned upside down. Sure, we could turn away, pretend that we don’t see or hear what is happening. But America would not be America if we turned our back on that suffering. It is not who we are, it is not in our DNA, and it is not in our interest.

Now, I’m not talking about being the world’s policeman, no. And I don’t think our job is to fix every problem. But in the time I’ve lived, I have seen a lot more people wish that they had done more to ease human suffering when they had the chance than have thought later on, well, wait a minute, we were too generous, or wait, the Marshall Plan did too much for Europe, or maybe, well, we shouldn’t have bothered trying to save those lives in Bosnia or Kosovo. Does anybody really believe those things today? Engagement is the right thing to do. It is also the smart thing to do, because the billions of dollars that we and others now devote to emergency response and recovery could be invested instead in creating new opportunities for growth both domestically and overseas. That’s the difference between running in place and working to build a better world.

Now let me be clear about something: The United States is not party to the sectarian and inter-ethnic rivalries that divide much of the Middle East, nor do we have to be. We do not covet any country's land or resources. We believe the region's people, not outsiders, should determine how and by whom they are governed. And we think the rights of all, including minorities, should be upheld. We respect everyone's desire to worship in accordance with the dictates of conscience. And after our experience over the last decade, we are fully aware of the hazards associated with external military action.

In short, the United States does not go in search of enemies in the Middle East. There are times, however, and this is one, when enemies come in search of us. And you know exactly what I'm talking about. The group calling itself the Islamic State is, in fact, neither a state nor truly Islamic. It is an adversary without a uniform, without any support by any government, and offering nothing, nothing in terms of coherent social or a political program. But it is a foe we take very seriously, in part because the dysfunction of some governments in the region has enabled these killers to seize control of more land and more resources than al-Qaida ever had on the best day of its existence.

It has stolen vast quantities of weapons and money. It is attempting to recruit the fanatical and misguided in dozens of countries. And it has gained sway over a considerable portion of Iraq's midsection, including Mosul, the second-largest city. In the process, it has become a threat to America's core interests. The terrorists pose an unacceptable danger to American personnel and facilities in Iraq and elsewhere, and their aggression adds to the terrible burdens placed upon our friends and allies in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon. And unless checked, this network could become a rallying point for the alienated and disaffected on every continent, spawning and imitators and spurring individuals in far-flung places to commit stupid, destructive, suicidal acts.

As the Islamic State or ISIL has shown by its actions, its desire is to impose its will over as many people and as much territory as it can. But unlike some extremist groups, it is relatively well organized, disciplined even. Its actions are systemic and planned. And ISIL doesn't hide its crimes. ISIL is defined by its crimes because the terrorists have nothing positive to offer anyone. Their strategy is based entirely on fear, and many of their captives are executed, some beheaded, some buried alive, some crucified. Others are given a choice to pledge allegiance or die. Children are tortured, killed, or forced to take up arms. Cultural and religious shrines have been desecrated, including the graves of prophets honored by all the children of Abraham. Aid workers and journalists such as David Haines and Alan Henning, James Foley, Steven Sotloff, and now in a crime that we have condemned in the strongest possible terms, Abdul Rahman Peter Kassig – they have all been among those brutally murdered. And as those who have escaped have dramatically testified, women and girls are sold into slavery, threatened, raped, and treated like chattel.

ISIL's leaders assumed that the world would be too intimidated to oppose them. Well, let us be clear: We are not intimidated; you are not intimidated; our friends and partners are not intimidated; ISIL is very, very wrong.

On September 10th, President Obama outlined America's plan to mobilize broad coalition to degrade and ultimately defeat ISIL. Two months later we are implementing Operation Inherent Resolve through multiple lines of effort, first by providing support to our military partners in the region; second, by applying pressure to the sources of terrorist financing; third, by striving to reduce the flow of foreign fighters; fourth, by exposing the absurdity of ISIL's religious claims; and fifth, by furnishing humanitarian aid to those hurt or made homeless by the terrorist attacks.

This strategy, which has both short and long-term elements, is starting to gain traction. On the diplomatic side we've reached out across the globe to Europe, Asia, to all parts of the Middle East to solicit solidarity and help. We've assembled a broad team in our own government, from Defense Secretary Hagel and the experts in the Treasury Department, to General John Allen, our special envoy to the coalition and a man who has served in the region and knows it well.

And ironically, we have found that our best recruiting tool is ISIL itself. ISIL is a coalition multiplier. And governments that can't agree on almost anything else agree on the imperative of confronting and defeating these terrorists. This is true of Sunni and Shia leaders, Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, members of smaller minority groups. Where once there was suspicion and discord, we now see the Saudi foreign minister link arms with Iraq's Kurdish and Shia leaders. We see the Government of Turkey agree to allow Kurdish fighters to cross its border and take on ISIL. We see the multi-confessional leadership of Lebanon jointly resisting armed incursions into their territory. In just a few weeks, the coalition has attracted more than five dozen contributors while many others have expressed horror at the terrorists' tactics and goals.

The breadth of this backing illustrates the galvanizing nature of the ISIL threat. It gives us the diversity and the credibility to move on all fronts, and it will provide Iraq's Sunni tribes with the confidence that they need to ultimately reclaim their lands.

One of ISIL's problems, after all, is that familiarity breeds contempt. As one Sunni leader in Iraq said recently, ISIL has humiliated the top sheikhs of Diyala and has done horrible and unforgivable crimes against people here. Last month, that tribe joined with Iraqi national forces in driving the terrorists out of 13 villages in its home province. As far back as January, we had begun increasing our reconnaissance flights and ramping up aid to the Iraqi Security Forces, shipping Hellfire missiles and other weapons that would've enabled the government, with stronger leadership, to prevent its territory from falling into the hands of terrorists.

This summer, after Mosul fell, President Obama sent a team of U.S. military advisors to assess the situation. But he also made clear to Iraqi leaders that they had to end the political gridlock that had alienated members of Iraq's Sunni majority – minority. And they had to put in place a leadership team – this was a requirement for our engagement – that would inspire widespread loyalty. They had to assemble security forces that would fight for more than clan, more than tribe, more than creed – fight for all of Iraq. And they had, in short, to create an alternative to ISIL that Iraqis from every faction could get behind.

To allow time for that, the coalition moved to halt ISIL's attempt to slaughter the Yezidi religious minority, and we did so. In coordination with Iraqi forces, we established control of the strategic Haditha Dam and rescued the besieged population of Amirli. And more recently, coalition airstrikes have aided fighters in Anbar and Kurdish defenders across the border in Kobani. Participating aircraft have come from America, Australia, several European countries – and in Syria, also from the Gulf states, unprecedented.

We are receiving vital help from NATO and have gained the support of foreign ministries and parliaments from one end of the Earth to the other, including the Asia Pacific, from which the President and I have just returned. Together, we are implementing a plan with our Iraqi partners to strengthen their security forces and stand up a new national guard. The guard is a breakthrough idea, because it will ensure that Iraqis are protected by people with whom they are familiar and in whom they have trust. It'll break down some of the sectarian divide. And the new units will operate at the provincial level, but will be answerable to the ministry of defense in Baghdad.

Overall, our campaign has begun to have significant impact. The momentum that ISIL built up during the summer has dissipated. It continues, yes, to commit terrible crimes. But it has also been forced to relinquish bases, abandon training sites, alter its mode of communications, disperse personnel, and stop the use of large convoys. Meanwhile, Iraq's national army is preparing to launch a counteroffensive and will do so when the time is right. And that is not a matter of years; it is a matter of months.

The process of internal political reform in Iraq is also going forward. For the first time, a truly national cabinet is in place. The new prime minister, president, speaker of the council of representatives have all expressed their determination to avoid the paralyzing sectarian rivalries that smooth the way for ISIL's gains. But as these strong leaders recognize, yes, substantial obstacles remain. Iraqi officials know that they must move quickly to reform discriminatory laws and build greater trust among Sunni tribes. They must bolster their governing institutions and make the country's armed forces more diverse, more professional. Our international coalition can be counted on to help with equipment, with training. But the political will to fight, to defend, and to liberate must come from within. From Erbil in the north to Basra in the south to Fallujah in the west, Iraqis must take the lead in rescuing their country from those who are trying to steal it.

Containing and gradually reducing the threat that ISIL poses is job number one for our Iraqi partners and for the coalition, increasingly led by the Arab community itself. But even if the government in Baghdad fulfills its responsibilities, it will still face a dire challenge because of events in Syria where ISIL has also established a destructive presence. The coalition's decision to carry out airstrikes in Syria came in response to a direct request from Iraq for help in defending against ISIL's aggression – a job that will be far harder if the terrorists can just duck across the border for reinforcements, money, and supplies. Removing that option, which is what we have begun to do, will take time, but controlling the border is an essential element of the coalition's military strategy. No matter how long it takes, we will succeed in doing that as the Iraqi army stands up and presents itself to do so.

Now, I am aware that some believe that airstrikes against ISIL in Syria will have the perverse effect of actually assisting the country's longtime dictator, Bashar al-Assad, whose ruthless repression has really generated the gravest humanitarian catastrophe certainly of this century. But that assumption is actually based on a misreading of the political reality in Syria. In fact, the Assad regime and ISIL are actually dependent on one another. That's why Assad has relentlessly bombed areas held by the moderate opposition while doing almost nothing to hinder ISIL's march.

This is a point worth emphasizing. Assad and ISIL are symbiotic. ISIL presents itself as the only alternative to Assad. Assad purports to be the last line of defense against ISIL. Both are stronger as a result. If this kind of opportunism sounds familiar, it is. History holds many examples, including in Central America three decades when rightwing militaries and leftwing guerillas each exploited the extremism of the other. And the cycle was broken only when the United States joined with regional allies and political moderates to build up the center.

There are vast differences between Latin America then and the Middle East now. I understand that. But the political equation of extremes against the middle is undeniably present in Syria. For too long, Syrians have felt that their only choice is actually no choice at all. With terrorists on one side and a vicious dictator on the other, our strategy, in coordination with our partners, is to offer the possibility of a new and more constructive choice – a reveille, if you will, for the moderates that excludes both the terrorists and Assad, an option that will be welcomed by every Syrian who wants to live in a country marked by civility and inclusiveness, good governance, and peace. And we believe that is what most Syrians are searching for, a way out of the chaos and out of the bloodshed.

That is why going forward the coalition intends to work with all Syrians who will work with us to empower the center. And progress is possible, we believe, if we are patient and combine coercive measures with creative diplomacy, and if we demonstrate the kind of international cooperation shown by our effort to destroy Syria's arsenal of chemical weapons. Russia and the United States worked very closely to do that, and now, for the first time in history during a conflict, all the chemical weapons that were subject to the convention have been removed and destroyed. It doesn't get enough focus, but think what would happen today if ISIL had access to those weapons had that not happened.

We believe there's an opportunity for cooperation, and we are – even as we have difficulties in Ukraine, we talk with the Russians about this. We talk with the Saudis and others, and we will continue to believe there is no military solution to the conflict in Syria. The most desirable outcome remains a negotiated political transition to a new and broadly representative government, and that would be the best way to marginalize foreign fighters, enable the return of refugees, and begin a process of reconciliation and recovery. This can only be a gradual process, but ISIL's emergence gives us a fresh cause to move in the right direction. The opportunity is there. We must seize it, and to that end, the United States calls on every country that has the ability to be able to make constructive contribution to that endeavor.

Now, I want to emphasize this coalition is not just a military campaign. It is a multinational effort, increasingly, as I said, marshaled by the Arab community, to promote stability and peace throughout the region for the benefit of everyone in the region. And although the center of our activities is Iraq – and Syria, to some degree – ISIL's influence is by no means confined to one part of the world. Its recruits, tragically – surprisingly to some – can come from any country. They can be male or female, of any ethnicity, and with or without spiritual convictions. Last year, two young men left Great Britain to join ISIL. Among the books that they ordered before departing was "Islam for Dummies" and "The Qu'ran for Dummies." So let's be honest: Those recruiting for ISIL aren't looking for people who are devout and knowledgeable about the tenets of Islam. They're looking for people who are gullible enough to believe that terrorists enjoy a glamorous lifestyle and pliable enough to do whatever they are told. The Arab ringleaders of ISIL may be evil, but they're not stupid. That's why the vast majority of suicide bombers and front line fighters are foreign recruits – and notice none of the leaders go seek paradise for themselves. The foreigners are also ordered to perpetrate many of the worst crimes, because they lack any ethnic or linguistic ties to them – those that they're called on to kill.

To extend its influence, the leaders of ISIL have called on followers to, "explode volcanoes of jihad," and they've asked them to do that in every country. Last month I visited Canada, where two terrorist attacks occurred a few days apart, one of which was directed at the nation's parliament. Last week a terrorist group in Egypt proclaimed fealty to ISIL. ISIL insists that its acts of murder, torture, slavery, rape, and desecration are in response to the commands of God – a claim that is, to use an old Boston expression, garbage. Much depends on the ability of respected figures from every branch of Islam to help potential recruits understand that ISIL is against everything that faith teaches and in favor of everything that it abhors.

In September at the UN Security Council, President Obama chaired a high-level meeting on the challenge posed by foreign fighters. That gathering, coupled with the launch of the coalition, has sparked a sharp spike in the information that is being shared all across the world now – a broad array of initiatives designed to make it harder for people to join ISIL and less likely that ex-militants will escape detection when they're trying to return home. Last February, for example, Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah issued a decree banning Saudi citizens from joining or publicly

supporting extreme religious and ideological groups. Indonesia has banned ISIL, revoked the passports of militants, and detained suspect travelers. In October, the United Kingdom arrested four ISIL sympathizers who had returned from Syria with plans to behead innocent people in the streets of London. The United States and other countries from Norway to New Zealand have warned citizens against travel to the war zone, and we are – they are – all prepared to take legal action against those joining or aiding ISIL.

In implementing these policies, we should allow young people who in the past signed up without knowing its true nature and who are genuine in their effort to seek rehabilitation to do so. But those who continue to join and fight today have no excuse. ISIL's identity as a band of murderous thugs should be plain to everyone, and those who willingly claim that identity for themselves bear the full onus for their actions.

So we have to curb the flow of recruits to ISIL, but we must also halt the flow of money. ISIL gets millions of dollars, literally, a month from extortion, looting, selling stolen oil bought by smugglers who operate outside of the conventional banking system. However, at some point, the oil does have to enter the legal economy. And by working backwards, we've been able to map where most of it comes from and to develop ideas about how to stop it. And we will also continue to bomb and destroy ISIL's oil infrastructure.

Meanwhile, ISIL may find that extortion and theft are dwindling sources of revenue. Overrunning and looting a town can indeed be profitable, but when the plunder is spent, all that remains is another village to feed, one more position to defend. In the provinces where ISIL now operates, the Iraqi Government had expected to spend more than two billion in administrative costs and services. Raising even a fraction of that amount to pretend to deliver the government they have promised to people is not possible. And when you combine it with other financial demands, it will place a growing strain on terrorist resources. We've already seen a 75 percent cut in pay for ISIL fighters in Mosul. That's why we keep saying this is a longer-term, patient strategy that we believe in. And as for kidnapping, the United States has set a heart-rending but absolutely necessary example by refusing to pay ransom for captured Americans. Last year the UN Security Council and the G8 firmly endorsed an identical policy, and all of the evidence shows that where and if a country has paid a ransom, there are many more people who are taken hostage.

Further, we have applied sanctions against more than two dozen individuals associated with ISIL or its predecessor group, and the bottom line is clear: ISIL cannot live on hate alone. Acting together, we can gradually deprive it of the financial oxygen that it needs to purchase loyalty. And when that happens, ISIL will not only be morally and intellectually bankrupt, but just plain bankrupt as well.

Finally, our coalition will wage a nonstop campaign in the battle of ideas. Following up on the recent Coalition Communications Conference in Kuwait, governments in and outside the region are implementing plans to rebut terrorist propaganda in both conventional and social media. And while ISIL piles murder upon murder, we are doing all we can to feed the starving, to shelter the homeless, and to heal the wounded. And this is a commitment that we take seriously and that we will honor both during and after Iraq's efforts to drive ISIL out.

The victims of ISIL already are in desperate straits. There are enormous numbers of people, as you know, displaced in Syria, about 10 million; 6 million within the country – 6 or 7 million within the country; million and a half in Lebanon; million and a half in Jordan or more, a similar number in Turkey. And the coalition is going to need to respond to that need. In the end, it really underscores the inescapable truth: This conflict is not between one civilization and another. Don't let anybody tell you that. This conflict is between civilization itself and barbarism.

And now we're all aware that the Obama Administration has been faulted for not having the perfect answer to every question related to the coalition's campaign – fair enough – but as a student of history, I cannot recall the United States entering into any major confrontation with advanced knowledge of all the possibilities. Certainly, we understand that the politics of the Middle East are tangled by ethnic and sectarian rivalries, that the ground force components of our coalition remain a work in progress, that ISIL will be very hard to dislodge from some areas, and that the coalition's diversity demands careful management. The coalition has assembled governments that are not fully accustomed to even working together. This makes, yes, for some challenging conversations here and there. But the broad willingness to cooperate is enabling us to make progress, and ultimately we will be far stronger because of the wide range of perspectives that we represent and are bringing to the table.

Now, I readily acknowledge that there are a variety of hard questions facing the coalition, but we're developing convincing responses to each, and we are determined to succeed because the stakes are so high. And to those who differ, we have a question of our own: Why would it have been better to stand aside and give ISIL a green light to continue its campaign of rape, slaughter, murder, and bigotry across the heart of the Middle East, and what would the consequences of that be? We are confronting ISIL not because it's easy, but because it's necessary. In that endeavor, we welcome all questions, but we also want to hear alternatives.

Every critic should be prepared to step forward with an answer to another question: What would they do?

And I also want to think together about another question. The participants in this conference are focused on long-term transformation and future trends, and well we should be. But as we do, let us remember the hard reality of the Middle East: If we don't defeat ISIL, there will be no viable or acceptable future for the Middle East. And if we don't build a strong future for the Middle East, it won't really matter what happens to ISIL. Because over time, we will only win the fight against violent extremism in the Middle East if we have a clear vision of what the future of that region should look like. There must be visible and appealing alternatives to the nihilism that flows from the likes of ISIL, al-Qaida, al-Nusrah, and Khorasan, and those alternatives do exist today. But the stronger and more successful that we can make them, the more we can actually engage in the effort to implement them, the better off we're all going to be.

Too many countries in the MENA region are held back by inefficient and inequitable economic policies, unresponsive political institutions, inadequate investments in education, and a lack of fairness towards women. Fixing that is a long-term proposition, but long-term commitments are precisely what we need right now. We cannot allow frustration in those countries to grow faster than opportunity. The most dangerous terrorist networks are those that act in the moment, but plan with future generations in mind. We have to do the same. I've heard this directly from foreign ministers of various countries in the region, how these groups plot and plan and grab kids when they're young and capture their minds and pay them a little money in the absence of anybody else doing anything for them, and then they become the recruits and then off they go.

We have to have an alternative. One hundred and seventy years ago, Thoreau wrote that "For every thousand hacking at the leaves of evil, there is one striking at the root." If today's children are to prosper and raise their own families in a climate that is free from fear, we have to strike – all of us – at the root. And that task is by no means simple, but believe me, it is within our power.

So even as we mobilize forces to defeat ISIL, we must also encourage measures to reform governance and create opportunity throughout the MENA region. That will not happen by trying to persuade the local population to turn away from its rich spiritual and cultural traditions. Change must develop from inside. But by reaching out where we can, investing in what we can, the United States can help to furnish the leverage that builders within the region seek.

In that endeavor, President Obama has asked each of us never to feel constrained by the limits of what we think we can do. He wants us to define and act on what needs to be done. And we know that there are many, many people in the Middle East, in and outside of government, who, notwithstanding current problems, are building platforms for development, diversity, democratic institutions, and peace, and they are doing it right now and they do it often at great risk.

Accordingly, we believe that the region will emerge, ultimately, from its current struggles with a deeper understanding of its own interest in settling disputes and in preventing differences in ideology and creed from degenerating into the kind of conflict that we see today.

We believe that nations that have been torn apart can heal their wounds, as our own country did long ago, and as Iraq has begun to do today. We believe that the destructive summons to terror will ultimately be rejected because it is at odds with the values of the vast majority of the region's people and at odds with the dominant religion – Islam – of that region.

And finally, we have faith in the future of the Middle East because we trust in the resilience of the human spirit which, along with the love of justice and freedom, has sustained our own land since before there was an America. And so together with our friends, together with our partners, in contrast to the terrorists and nihilists who aim to destroy, we remain builders resolved to create for future generations a better world. And it is our determination to succeed that causes terrorists to fear us far more than we will ever fear them. Thank you. (Applause.)

8. Hagel Lauds Nuclear Enterprise Airmen As 'Indispensable' in National Security (11-14-2014)

By Amaani Lyle
DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Nov. 14, 2014 – On the first stop of his five-day domestic trip to interact with military members, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel today praised what he called the “reliable and effective” airmen who support the nuclear enterprise at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota.

The same day the Pentagon announced the results of a nuclear enterprise military review, Hagel met with airmen to report that the matter requires constant focus, leadership, attention, management and resources.

Shaping the Future

Hagel told his audience today's young officers and enlisted leaders face those challenges.

“They are the ones who shape the enterprise for the future,” Hagel said. “You all are the ones who will ascend to these important leadership responsibilities.”

Noting the world's unprecedented complexities and constant changes, Hagel told airmen the evolution will continue at a rapid rate.

"We can't turn that back, but we can help shape it, as the United States has shaped the global environment with our allies since World War II," Hagel said.

But Hagel also acknowledged the spread of freedom and the absence of a World War III.

"There are more people free in the world today than ever before ... with options ... possibilities and more hope," he said.

Though that freedom yields greater challenges, the need to understand the military's role persists, he said, responding to and anticipating crises while thinking and planning for the future.

"When you think about what's going on in the Middle East ... it isn't about less expression or less freedom," he said. "But so much is going on in the world that if we can see through it ... plan ... and invest in the future ... we'll come out better and stronger at the other end."

Hagel noted collaboration between the Air Force and Navy in their nuclear endeavors, and described reviewer suggestions such as upgrading equipment, vehicles and facility repairs.

Hagel also noted the need for cultural change, particularly from information he garners from young officers across varying family and personal situations in the nuclear enterprise. "Some of you want to stay and will stay in this business that you're in; others will want varying experiences."

Investing in People

Hagel said he insists the quality of military people is the most critical element of the defense enterprise.

"I don't want to preside over a time at the Pentagon, nor does Air Force Secretary Deborah James and all of our leaders, that we allowed that to go down," Hagel said. "The responsibility of leadership is to prepare for the future, prepare an institution for the future."

Whether in dealings with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the Russians, Ebola or endemic health issues, the secretary said the United States cannot neglect its current or future investment in people.

"You are an indispensable element of our national security," Hagel said. "You are the main deterrent for the security of this country ... and we can't overlook that or take that for granted, ever."

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